

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR

SUBJECT: PRESS GUIDANCE ON NEW YORK TIMES STORY ON RABIN
TALKS WITH PRESIDENT FORD

1. GWERTZMAN IN NEW YORK TIMES TODAY HAS STORY RUNNING
ON INSIDE PAGE HEADLINED QUOTE FORD SAID TO PLAN TO PUSH
FOR ISRAELI-JORDANIAN TALKS. END QUOTE. MAIN POINT OF
STORY IS THAT PRESIDENT FORD AGREED WITH RABIN IN THEIR
TALKS TO INVESTIGATE JORDANIAN WILLINGNESS TO NEGOTIATE FOR
A WEST BANK AGREEMENT. WIRELESS FILE CARRIES EXCERPTS.

2. THE FOLLOWING GUIDANCE WAS GIVEN TO THE DEPARTMENT
SPOKESMAN FOR THE DAILY BRIEFING TODAY:

QUOTE Q. IS IT TRUE THAT THE PRESIDENT HAS AGREED TO A
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SUGGESTION BY PRIME MINISTER RABIN HERE TO SEE WHETHER

JORDAN IS WILLING TO NEGOTIATE FOR A WEST BANK AGREEMENT?

A. THAT REPORT IS INCORRECT. IT IS PREMATURE TO DRAW CONCLUSIONS ABOUT THE ROUTE TO BE PURSUED IN THE MIDDLE EAST NEGOTIATIONS. AS THE WHITE HOUSE SAID FOLLOWING THE

LAST MEETING BETWEEN THE PRESIDENT AND PRIME MINISTER RABIN--THEIR TALKS WERE PART OF THE EXPLORATIONS WE ARE MAKING WITH ALL THE PARTIES IN THE AREA ON HOW BEST TO PROCEED. THEY WERE NOT DECISION-MAKING SESSIONS, AND OUR EXPLORATION OF VARIOUS POSSIBLE ALTERNATIVES CONTINUES. I HAVE NO DETAILS FOR YOU. WE BELIEVE THE BEST WAY TO MOVE THE PROCESS FORWARD IS THROUGH QUIET DIPLOMACY. END QUOTE.

3. NO QUESTIONS WERE ASKED AT THE BRIEFING. POST MAY, IF ASKED, DRAW ON GUIDANCE TO ANSWER PRESS QUERIES. INGERSOLL

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